

Federal Programs Guru Bettie Tipton will retire after 45 years in CTE

Anticipation - looking into the future with hope and excitement is something many individuals do as they look forward to their retirement years. And, Federal Programs Branch Supervisor Bettie Tipton is no

different as she prepares to embark on the next leg of her life that begins August 1, 2010 – the first official day of her retirement. In a career that spans 45 years, Tipton will be remembered on a personal as well as professional basis by colleagues and friends. The name **Bettie Tipton** stands out for numerous reasons as this woman has been able to attain some uncommon results during her personal journey through career and technical education.

Growing up on a farm had its benefits and Bettie Tipton learned the value of hard work at an early age. One of her responsibilities was to carry fresh drinking water to the house every night – something she remembers to this day. In those times, everyone had chores and you



learned how to be responsible by completing your chores. Under the watchful eyes of her parents, Bettie developed a work ethic that followed her throughout her 45 years in the workforce. “My parents had a major impact on my life,” says Tipton. “And what they taught me still impacts.”

The impact of Tipton’s parents has been far-reaching. Her farm duties continued during her years at Cropper Elementary School through her graduation from Bagdad High School. Although she never milked a cow, her father used to “sit me on the backs of some of the cows. My dad made pets out of all the cows and calves,” says Tipton.

When the family raised tobacco, she helped set, house, and strip the crop. She also drove the tractor in her father’s fields to pick up hay and cooked for farm hands during summers prior to and during high school. Given her family history, it’s no surprise that Tipton is still involved as one-half owner of the family farm. She actively participates in the management of farm operations.

Upon graduation from high school, Tipton received a scholarship to attend Georgetown College. Her plan was to major in English.

“Well I got home sick, went home, and went to work as a typist and file clerk.” said Tipton. “I got bored and decided I did not want to do that work for the rest of my life.”

Over time, Tipton worked part and full-time jobs at a number of businesses and state government offices including the Deposit Bank of Pleasureville,

Department of Child Welfare, Department of Economic Security, Legislative Research Commission (LRC), and the Department of Education.

She enrolled at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) and graduated in 1965 with a Bachelor of Science degree. Her area of concentration was business education. “Business gave me many options,” said Tipton.

During her freshman year at EKU, she worked as a teacher’s assistant for a disabled professor by helping him type and grade papers. Through her summer breaks, Tipton worked at the Department of Child Welfare, LRC, and bank. Upon graduation from EKU, her number one goal was to work in business. However, that didn’t quite work out the way she planned.



Tipton:

“The jobs I interviewed for were the same types of jobs I had done before my degree. I was ready to move on to a higher level position, greater responsibility and more money. My mother, unbeknown to me, called the Shelby County superintendent and told him of my graduation from EKU. She wanted to know if there were any openings. He did have a middle school English teacher opening. The area in business education that I graduated with had enough credits in English for me to teach English.

“When the business teacher at the high school resigned, I called Superintendent Trammel and asked if I could be moved to the high school to teach business. To my surprise, he had already decided to move me there. Mr. Trammel had been the agriculture teacher at my high school. Bagdad High School was very small and all the teachers knew every student who entered those doors. Mr. Trammel knew I had been a good student and was a responsible individual. He hired me because he knew I could do the job.”

When Tipton began teaching at the Shelby County High School, she taught shorthand, Business English, general business and office practice from September 1965 through June 1968. She was also the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) student organization club sponsor and cheerleading sponsor.

Tipton decided to go back to ECU to get a master's degree and was advised by Superintendent Trammel to take a leave of absence from the Shelby County Board of Education instead of resigning.

"This way I could continue to pay my part of teacher retirement," said Tipton. "When I got my degree, I had a job at the new Shelby County Vocational Center (now the area technology center). It was during the school's first year of operation."

Tipton earned her Master of Arts degree, with an emphasis in business education, from ECU in 1969. She worked at the Shelby County Vocational Center from June 1969 - July 1970. During that time she taught typing II, shorthand I, business communications, and served as FBLA advisor. She also taught a couple of short-term adult business classes.

With a few years of vocational teaching experience under her belt, Tipton looked forward to other opportunities and was offered a job through the Bureau of Vocational Education. At that time, there were 15 vocational regions across the Commonwealth. The position she accepted was coordinator for Reimbursed Vocational Programs in the Region 6 office located in Jefferson County. From

July 1970 - March 1973, Tipton provided technical assistance to all Region 6 vocational programs in local school districts, state operated schools, community colleges, and universities that received federal funds.

Tipton:

“At the regional office, I worked with 15 counties surrounding Jefferson County, including Jefferson County. My job was to oversee the requirements of federal legislation, start new programs, modify programs, complete program rosters, write local plans for federal funds, monitor expenditures of federal funds, and keep appropriate personnel up-to-date with new initiatives. In addition, I also made visits to see program operation and offer suggestions to teachers that needed help.”



In March 1973, Tipton was hired by Dr. Carl F. Lamar as the new coordinator of Vocational Program Evaluation. The position was in the Department of Education's Bureau of Vocational Education. She made her way to Frankfort and her duties were to develop and implement a vocational program evaluation for all vocational programs that received federal funds. She served in the position until September 1979. Tipton believes Dr. Lamar was instrumental in her growth and development – in getting her to look at all sides of an issue.



Tipton:

“My job was to develop and implement a program evaluation system for career and technical education. This was a requirement in what was then the Perkins legislation and in that job I was given the task of getting the State Board of Education recognized as an accrediting agency so the students enrolled in postsecondary programs could get Pell Grants. It was about that time that Title IX was passed. I was also assigned the job of getting all the

state schools in compliance and providing technical assistance to technical programs in local school districts.

Tipton's next venture was to become Methods of Administration program director. She was responsible for developing and implementing the federal regulations for vocational education that prohibited discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, and disability. This was a new program which resulted from a federal lawsuit that mandated compliance audits and on-site reviews to see that vocational educators were meeting the federal regulations.

Tipton became the Vocational Equity Branch program director in 1980 – a position she would hold until 1998. She was in charge of managing and administering approximately \$2 million in equity grants. The grants were awarded to reduce gender bias and stereotyping, as well as to provide single parents and homemakers with marketable skills to support themselves and their families. She was responsible for reviewing local applications for federal funds to see if equity was included in the plan and to evaluate all vocational programs to determine the progress made in the elimination of gender bias and stereotyping.

During the last leg of her CTE career, Bettie Tipton has served as the manager of Federal Programs. Throughout the many years of her profession, layers of experience helped prepare her to be at the helm of administering Perkins requirements for the Commonwealth of Kentucky (including Dr. Carl F. Lamar's professional development and resolve that she look at an issue from all sides). "During Dr. Lamar's tenure, he was always the teacher and expanded the opportunity for me to grow," says Tipton.

In the final analysis, friends and colleagues would agree - few, if any, across the United States have her depth of experience and ardent support for CTE's many different populations – especially those populations that are overlooked.



Front row (l to r): Angie Crowder, administrative consultant; Tipton, and Debora Almgren, technical team leader. Back row (l to r): Sarah Galliher, administrative consultant and Debbie Seider, service area coordinator.



Gerri Austin,
administrative
secretary and
Tipton.

Austin:
"Good luck
Bettie. I'll
miss you."

Almgren:

"Bettie has been a great mentor and friend. Always available to provide assistance with any question or problem, she has dedicated her life to providing service to the career-tech programs. Her heart will always be with CTE and the technical education family will miss her."

Seider:

"I've know Bettie for 15 years and she has been my supervisor for 3 years. She's been one of the best supervisors I have ever had."

"Bettie has given much to the field of education, to CTE students, to students with special needs, and to nontraditional students. Her capacity in caring for other people is second to none. She has been an inspiration to me and to others. That's why there is a scholarship for students with special needs named for Bettie. I will definitely miss her."

Galliher:

"Working with Bettie has been both an honor and a privilege. There were some hard times as we worked with new Perkins legislation; but, Bettie led us through like the trooper she is. I'll really miss her."

Crowder:

"I have enjoyed working with Bettie and she has been a great mentor in helping me learn non-traditional and civil rights work. She is very dedicated and passionate toward non-trad and it is awesome to see that passion in someone. I am very blessed to know Bettie as a boss, a mentor, and a friend."

During her many years of service, Tipton has been recognized on numerous occasions for outstanding accomplishments.

Tipton was presented the Outstanding Service Award at the Kentucky Association of Career and Technical Education in 1999 and received the same award from the Association of Career and Technical Education at the national conference in 2000 by ACTE President William Smelson. The award is given in recognition of educators who have made the highest meritorious contributions to the improvement, promotion, and development of career and technical education. She was nominated by Donallie Stratton and Dr. Charlotte Tulloch



Tipton and Jezik



In 2004, she was presented the Professional Excellence Award by OCTE Executive Director Emil S. Jezik.

The Professional Excellence Award is given on the basis of professionalism, teamwork, positive attitude, and a willingness by the employee to go above and beyond the normal course of duty.



Beneath the Winning Smile

By: John Marks
OCTE Executive Director

Beneath the winning smile
and the hearty laugh,

Behind the demure exterior
and that great big desk,

stands a lady of extraordinary proportions,
(and yes, she IS standing!)
armed with *Carl Secrets* etched forever in her heart
(*Lamar and Perkins that is*).



With a copy of the first KY state plan safely under one arm
and Perkins 4 tucked under the other,
she fights for the underdog,
the underrepresented,
the mistreated and the oppressed.
(*well, enough about farming*).

But, Alas...
her work here is done.

As she mounts her steed of commonsense
and moves out onto the highway of retirement challenges,
she will ride the wind of experience,
and continue to fight the never ending battle for
Truth, Justice, and the Career and Technical Education Way.

We love you Bettie.
You are forever part of the KY Tech Family



Mike Kindred
OCTE deputy executive director:

"I want to take a moment to reflect upon the many outstanding accomplishments Bettie Tipton has completed over the course of her 45 year career. When I think about Bettie, I think about the respect that she has gained in Kentucky, as well as throughout the country. As a principal and in my current position, I have relied on Bettie's knowledge, experience and ethical standards to guide us in the right direction."

"When it comes to Perkins legislation, Bettie Tipton is the first lady."



Charlene Baxter
Administrative Specialist III

"Ms. Bettie is one of a handful of folks who was here when I started working in 1979. To me, Ms. Bettie was a wonderful supervisor, mentor and most importantly, a friend. Quite frankly, I will probably miss her more than anyone because she has a tremendous work ethic; she has always been willing to share her knowledge; and she has been a great supporter of career and technical education."

"When the 1997 Kentucky Postsecondary Education Reform Act was passed, my position was transferred to KCTCS. I am most grateful to her for hiring me back into Kentucky Tech in 1998 when my job with KCTCS was relocated to Lexington. The travel to and from the job would have been extremely difficult."

"I wish Ms. Bettie a great retirement - you're the best!"





***Donnalie Stratton
KDE consultant:***

“Bettie has been a friend professionally and personally for several years. My first acquaintance with Bettie was during her tenure as a program coordinator in Kentucky Tech Region 6, Jefferson.

“Throughout her years with career and technical education, she has been active in professional organizations, a leader and supporter in the Kentucky Association of Career and Technical Education and the affiliate, Career and Technical Association: Special Needs Personnel.

“This association has established a scholarship for a secondary and a postsecondary student in

career and technical education known as the Stratton/Tipton scholarship. The development of this scholarship was guided by her dedication to provide opportunities for deserving students to further their educational endeavors.

“Throughout the years, Bettie has provided leadership to all vocational/CTE programs, services, and activities. Her role as state coordinator for Equity Programs provided opportunities to give guidance and directions to special populations. Through this association, Bettie and I have worked closely in the development of the state plan for career and technical education.

“Bettie has been a friend, co-worker, and we have experienced many changes in CTE throughout the years. I wish her well in her retirement and our continued friendship.”

Question and Answer Session with Bettie Tipton

How did you become interested in vocational education?

“Initially I got into vocational education because of the courses I took in high school – plus, I lived on a farm. However, when I was in high school, girls could not enroll in agriculture. Therefore, business courses were my entry into vocational education.”



What do you consider the single most important legislation impacting vocational-technical education?

“To me, the most important legislation impacting vocational-technical education was the Vocational Education Act of 1963 that Congressman Carl D. Perkins fought so hard to pass. Since that time, amendments to the Act have resulted in positive changes. Over time, changes to the federal legislation continue to stimulate or prompt program improvement, improved instruction, and increased student achievement. All pieces of legislation, starting with the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 (also known as the National Vocational Smith-Hughes Act) required academics to be a part of career and technical education. The academics that were and continue to be a part of career and technical education are ‘practical academics or applied academics’.”

How do you think people will remember you?

“I think I will be remembered as the lady who said ‘no.’ The Perkins legislation had and continues to have specific outcomes to be reached – funding is required to be used for those activities. Many times when technical assistance was requested regarding the use of Perkins funds, my answer was no. Quite simply it was because the request was not legal. On occasion, I even had to tell my bosses no. It was never anything personal, just my duty in following the law.”

What do you consider your most important contribution during your tenure?

“Throughout my career, the most important contribution I made was being available to answer questions and provide technical assistance.”

What do you consider to be the most important issue facing vocational-technical education today?

“In my opinion, the biggest issue facing career and technical education today is having the ability to stay current with business and industry—the capability to change.”



Who had the greatest impact on your career?

“Dr. Carl F. Lamar had the greatest impact on my career. In my opinion, he was a great teacher because he constantly challenged me to be as knowledgeable as possible and to continue to seek improvement.”

“He was the commissioner of Vocational Education when I began my employment with the state. Dr. Lamar regularly held meetings with staff that were actually professional development activities. This was for a specific reason. He told us we needed to understand the 1963 Vocational Education Act so that we could help school district and university personnel implement the new amendments introduced in 1967.”

“Through the years, there have been others who impacted my career through collaboration, casual conversation, and an exchange of ideas. Career and technical education has been good to me. I believe students who learn technical education and skills training will have what they need to be successful. Education is lifelong and students can now choose to pursue a postsecondary degree, or go to work and receive on-the-job training to become successful.”





Recognition for Years of Service

Befitting the “Queen of Perkins,” OCTE executive director John Marks recognized Bettie Tipton’s 45 years of service during the Kentucky Tech Principals’ meeting on Wednesday, July 21, 2010. It was a great opportunity for Tipton to be in the spotlight and for the audience to give her a standing ovation in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments in CTE.

Editor’s Note:

It has always amazed me that even with a tremendous work load, you have managed to be involved in CTE student organization activities. Without a doubt, it is your dedication of who we are and what we do. After all, it’s supposed to be about the development of the student – right?

Without your support, I know the 2005 Kentucky Tech Prep Showcase would not have happened – and, it brought national prominence to Kentucky Tech Prep projects. You never forgot what you were working to achieve – and that also included marketing CTE.

Many people make up a system. Some work harder than others; however, only a few somehow reach out to all the components that make up the system – and, those few do it in a positive, successful manner. You are one of those select few. May your retirement be as rewarding as your career.

Good News Flash #328

By Fran Dundon

July 28, 2010

 *nically Speaking*

 *nically Speaking*

Office of Career and Technical Education

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Special thanks to Photographer Tim Thornberry for providing some of the photographs used in this story